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Ninety-fifth Anniversary

1863-1958

A Historical Sketch

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And let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us;
And establish thou the work of our hands upon us;
Yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.
Psalm 90:17

Mariadahl Lutheran Church

Cleburne, Kansas

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Thy Kingdom Come

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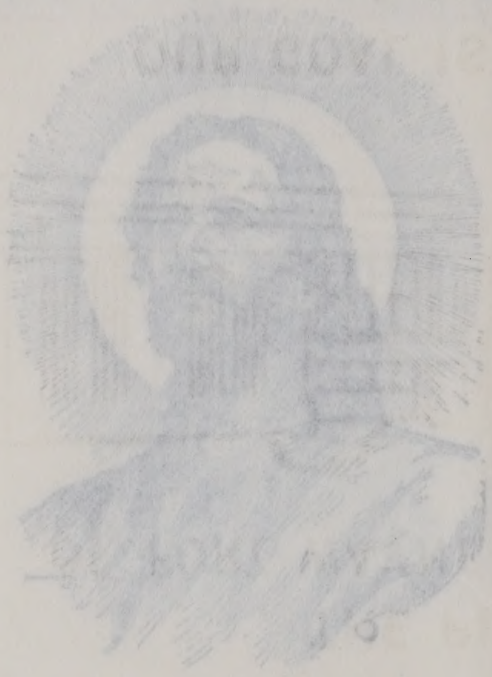


My Church! My Church!

My Church! my Church! my dear old Church!
My fathers' and my own!
On prophets and apostles built,
And Christ the cornerstone!
All else beside by storm or tide
May yet be overthrown;
But not my Church, my dear old Church,
My fathers' and my own.

CHURCH INTERIOR

The altar painting, "Jesus' Resurrection," was donated by the C. J. Dahlberg family in 1895; in 1912 the pipe organ was given by the N. P. Johnson family; the pulpit by the Gustaf Johnson family and the altar by Will, Olive and Emma Sanderson. Later, the candlesticks and cross were given by the F. A. Johnson children in memory of their father; the two gold vases by the Neils Christensen family in memory of their parents; the Service Books by Johannes Vandahl in memory of Emil Mellgren and the missal stand by Dennis Holt in memory of his parents.

The Pastor's Message

"O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord." Jeremiah 22:29

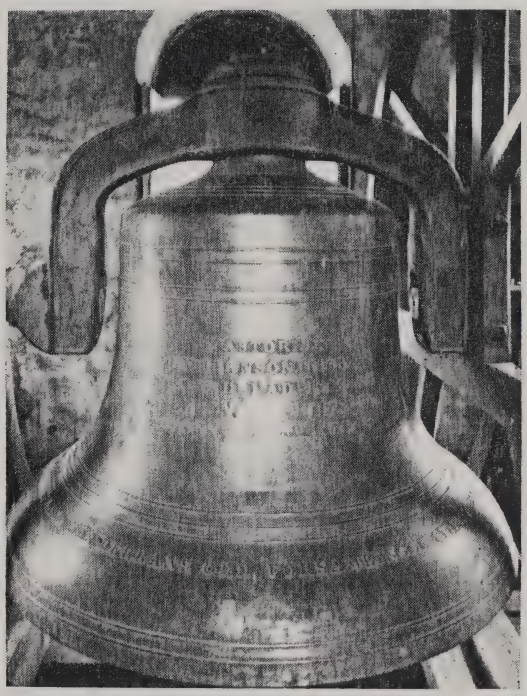
OCTOBER 14, 1958 marked the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Mariadahl Lutheran Church. This anniversary will be observed October 17-19, 1958.

The above scripture is written on the bell in the church tower which has called people in the Blue Valley to "hear the word of the Lord." It will soon be silent as this will be the final anniversary as the "Tuttle Creek Dam" will remove this church and communities in this Valley. Therefore, this anniversary book will include the historical sketch, pictures and all other important information concerning the church which the people have loved so dearly.

As we look back upon these years of grace that have been ours as a congregation, we look with gratitude to God for these men and women of faith, courage, and foresight, who under God have built so well, established and continued the work of Jesus Christ in this community. We can see the hand of God as we view the small beginnings blossoming forth into a well established congregation. We are impressed by the faithfulness of many of the pioneers as they set out to build the oldest Swedish Lutheran Church west of the Missouri River and the first in Kansas erected in the year 1866. Many were the struggles that were encountered but yet all these were met with faith in Almighty God who worked in and through humble servants. They ventured forth to have faith in God. Mark 11:32.

As this will be the last episode of this church, it will be of great significance as we look to God to bless each member as they move and become members of His church in a new location. May God provide new homes and grant them courage and strength to make the necessary adjustments in their new locations and may they go forth in His Name to live the abundant life to His honor and glory.

PASTOR GLENN L. STENHOLM



"O LAND, LAND, LAND!
HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD"

This bell was cast in Troy, New York, and put into the tower in 1884. It has a beautiful tone quality and remarkable resonance.

N. EVERETT HEDEEN
President of
West Central Conference

Greetings

The Mariadahl Lutheran Church
Cleburne, Kansas

Dear Friends:

Sincere greetings to you, pastor and people of Mariadahl on this, the Ninety-fifth Anniversary of Lutheran congregational witness in the Blue River Valley. This is an event rich in significance for us all and your sister churches of the West Central Conference salute you.

Yours is a congregation which, under God, has built Godly lives. This we see as we call the roll of farmers, teachers, pastors, doctors, homemakers, college presidents, missionaries, lawyers and others who were born and nurtured under the witness of your church.

Yours is a congregation which established a child welfare program and remained in the forefront to sustain it.

Yours is a congregation which has kept bright the missionary flame feeding it by offerings of prayer, study, money and lives.

Yours is a rich history. Pastors faithful and true have been here. Members who walked with their Lord dwell here. For all that this means we are grateful.

And what of tomorrow? Our emotions are mixed and regret is real as we contemplate a morrow that in this valley will dawn upon a closed church, and people seeking new homes in new surroundings. There is to be another use for this valley and time alone will say whether the next century will be more fruitful here than the past one has been.

We must be mindful that God and His Church are not in bondage to particular buildings or locale. Were that true your fathers would never have ventured out to settle this valley. Ninety-five years ago they faced a new day with faith and determination to build anew. God was with them and they succeeded.

Today a new and different day awaits you, their children. This anniversary can well be a call for you to draw upon the faith built into your lives by God through the Mariadahl Lutheran Church. Whether you are young or old the Lord will sustain you even as he did the early settlers. And so there may be another home, another church but you will have the same God. Your soul must needs bear the same needs to an all-sufficient, all-knowing Saviour.

Thus we are thankful today for the blessing of your congregation and pray sincerely that you may claim and build upon this word from the Book of Joshua 1:9 "Be strong and of good courage—Jehovah Thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

N. Everett Hedeen

July 18, 1958

Mariadahl Evangelical Lutheran Church
Cleburne, Kansas

Dear Christian Friends:

The early days of Mariadahl are an integral part of the history of Kansas. The pioneers who organized your congregation were among those who became the first citizens of the state when it was admitted into the union in 1861.

That first chapter of your settlement and church is romance, tragedy, and hope. It was a time of conflict, not only with rugged natural surroundings but also in the area of social controversy. Nevertheless, in that soil grew the Mariadahl Church, which is now celebrating its 95th anniversary.

In your beautiful valley you and your fathers and grandfathers have lived in tranquillity, tilling your acres, raising your families, and concerning yourselves for things eternal as well as temporal. There is now the prospect of having to leave those surroundings forever behind you as a congregation. But the memories will linger on to the end of time. The story of your settlement and its intrepid pioneers and their children will be written into the record of American history.

The Augustana Lutheran Church congratulates you on the occasion of your anniversary. We would remind you of the unfailing promises of God, that those who love Him will never have to carry heavier burdens than those for which He gives adequate strength. Wherever you go, as a congregation or as individuals, if you are faithful to Him and His Word your future is secure. May this anniversary be an occasion for expressing profound gratitude to God for what He has accomplished through the ministry of your congregation during the course of nearly a century.

Yours in Christ,

Oscar A. Benson

OSCAR A. BENSON

OAB:jn

July 18, 1958

Greetings to Mariadahl!

Certainly it is with mingled feelings that we would bring a greeting to Mariadahl on this occasion of its 95th anniversary. It may be that none of us will see the observance of your 100th anniversary. In the course of events circumstances have so changed that even the site where this historic church now stands will know it no more.

But truly Mariadahl will be said to have rounded out a century of service in the Kingdom of God. Future generations will still feel the impact of its witness in the lives of her spiritual children and descendants. Not only directly, in the high percentage of pastors and other kingdom workers in proportion to its membership that have entered full-time Christian service, but in the field of education within the Church and without as well as in the other professions Mariadahl has a record that can hardly be surpassed.

We thank God for the privilege that was ours in serving as pastor here. Our hearts may be heavy at the thought of the dissolution of this community. But still we can rejoice to know that Mariadahl has bequeathed such a rich heritage to future generations. It is our earnest hope and prayer that Kansas Conference and Augustana Lutheran Church will do something to mark this site as one of real significance in the history and unfolding development of our Lutheran Christian witness in our beloved country and abroad, in missions, the pastorate, education and community life.

Psalm 100.

Sincerely,
C. Wilbur Nelson,
Pastor 1925-1931.

July 25, 1958

To the Members and Friends of Mariadahl Lutheran Church

Cleburne, Kansas

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is a distinct pleasure for me to extend a greeting to you on the occasion of your 95th Anniversary.

Someone has said that life is like a book. It is written chapter by chapter. So it has been from the early days when the first pioneers came to the beautiful Blue Valley. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit they made a contribution to the book. Based on a sincere faith in God many chapters have since been written. We find in the book records of a consecrated people walking with God and being used for the extension of His Kingdom. Records of accomplishments and achievements will find their way also into the story of the congregation.

Yet, there is the unwritten record known only to our Heavenly Father of the souls which have been won for Christ for eternity. Souls that have come needy and worn with the cares of this world and have gone on their way refreshed when they have partaken of the Word and Sacrament.

Perhaps unique is the chapter of association with a Conference institution of mercy. Few, if any, rural congregations may ever have this privilege. How we can rejoice and praise God for the opportunity of serving Him through such an enterprise.

Now the closing chapters are being penned. There is no doubt but that it is a chapter being written with sadness of heart and reluctance of will. To leave the valley and our beloved Mariadahl, is not an easy task. Yet, as we go, we may continue to walk on the pathways of the Lord. Our witness is vital for we carry with us the truth of His word and the promise, "Lo, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Continue then in prayer for as Christians we have but one task—wherever we may be or wherever we may go—to share our testimony that there is redemption in Christ Jesus our Lord.

May God grant joy, inspiration, thankfulness and blessed memories as you experience the fellowship of another Anniversary.

Greetings to all from our home.

Yours in Christ,
A. Malcolm Gustafson

Ninety-five Years of Mariadahl's History

MARIADAHL, Mary's valley, named in honor of Maria Johnson, mother of the first Swede to come to Kansas, at first aspired to be a town as well as a church community. At one time there were two stores, one blacksmith shop, a wagon shop, a harness shop, a carpenter shop and a post office in the vicinity. The village attempted to get the railroad line to pass through it, but when the tracks were laid west of the river, Mariadahl village languished and died. But the name has lived on for the farming community lying between Cleburne and Randolph, with Mariadahl Church in the center.

Mariadahl is a name charged with many emotional overtones. It means church. It means Valley. It means peacefulness and beauty. It means fond associations.

When William Shannon and his Swedish farm hand caught their first glimpse of the valley, June 20, 1855, they must have had some emotional stirrings, too. For here they stayed, they, whose restless spirits had brought them on such a long and difficult journey. John A. Johnson, with his brother Nels Peter and wife, left Sweden because they felt America was the land of opportunity. They got as far as Galesburg, Illinois where they took whatever employment they could find. John began working for Shannon. Mr. Shannon had hard luck in Galesburg, so he and John migrated to Kansas. Here they found rich land which was theirs almost for the taking. Nels Peter Johnson and family arrived the next year. A son, John William, born to them December 30, 1856, was the first boy of Swedish parentage to be born in Kansas.

The year 1858 found more settlers arriving. N. P. Axelson, his wife, Anna, and son Axel; John Sanderson, his wife, Charlotte, and daughter, Jenny Margurite; and a young Dane, Neils Christensen, all homesteaded west of the river. Christensen later married Christine Johnson, a sister of John and Peter.

After hearing of the death of their father, the Johnson brothers wrote letters to their Mother urging her and the rest of the family in Sweden to come to the Blue Valley. September 30,

JOHN A. JOHNSON HOMESTEAD
He was first Swede to come to Kansas.

N. P. JOHNSON HOME
Where Mariadahl Lutheran Church was organized in 1863.

1859, after a long and tedious trip, the mother, Maria, her daughters Christine, Charlotta, Emma, Clara and her sons David with his wife and child, Gustaf and Victor arrived in this valley. From Chicago they had been accompanied by a Mrs. Klang (Swenson) and her five daughters who had been in America long enough to learn some of the language, making it easier for the travelers the rest of their journey.

Less than a year later, August 18, 1860, Maria Johnson died. No church, no cemetery existed. Therefore, she was buried on her son Peter's place. Her death made the devout people earnestly consider purchase of land for a church and cemetery. A subscription list dated September 2, 1860, for the purpose of obtaining church property was in the hands of the congregation for many years and a photostatic copy is in this book.

Traveling ministers sometimes visited the neighborhood. Rev. John Johnson came here from Princeton, Illinois, in the fall of 1863. He gathered the people almost every day for study of God's Word. He conducted Holy Communion services and organized, catechized and confirmed a class. He called the people together to discuss and make resolutions concerning the organization of the church they desired. On the afternoon of October 14, 1863, the group gathered at the home of Peter Johnson where, after a short introduction in the name of the Triune God, the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Mariadahl, Kansas was organized.

Minutes of that meeting read as follows:

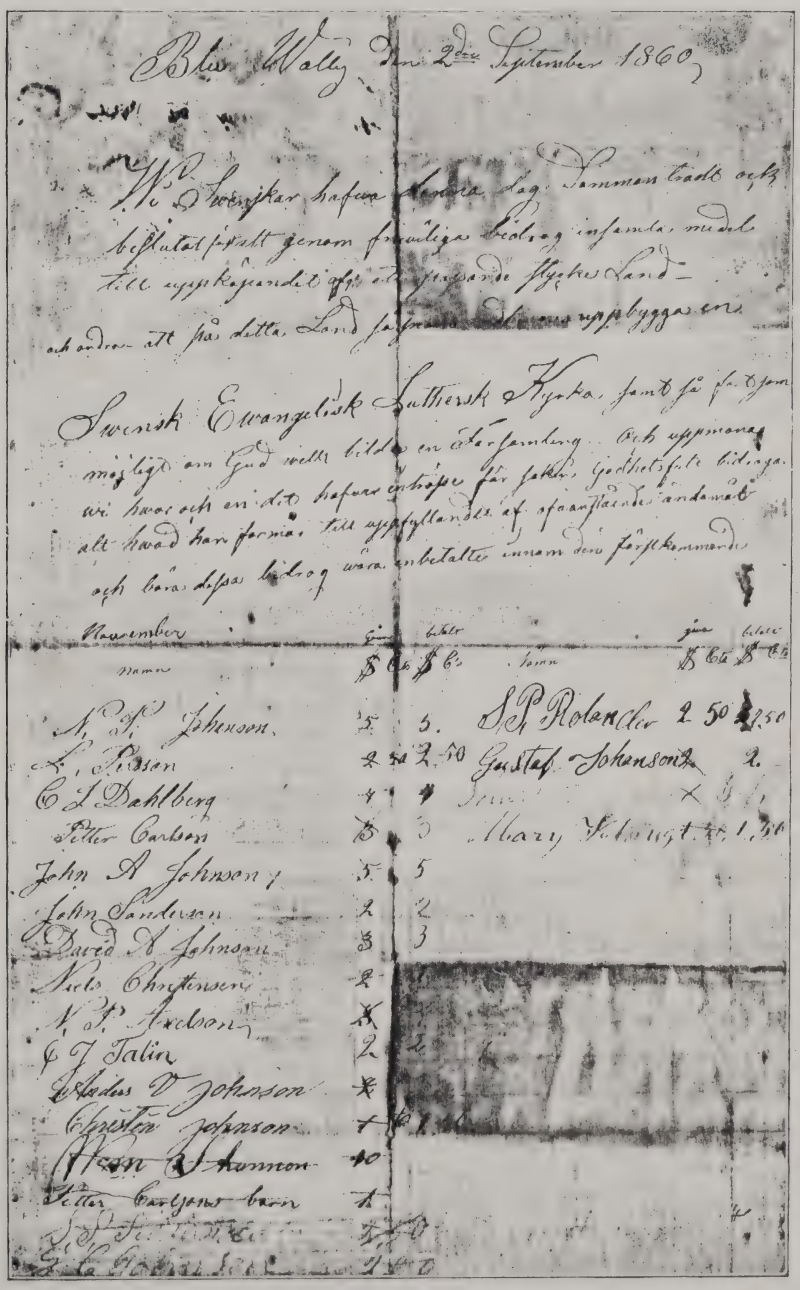
In the year 1863, the 14th of October the congregation was organized and named The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran church in Mariadahl, Pottawatomie County, Kansas. It was moved and carried that the Augustana Synod church constitution be adopted. The following expressed willingness to become members: C. J. Dahlberg and family, N. P. Axelson and family, N. P. Johnson and family, John A. Johnson and wife, John Sanderson and family, Nels Christensen and Melchor Falin.

A decision was made to adopt the constitution of the Augustana Synod Churches.

A unanimous decision was made that the congregation ask admission into the Augustana Synod.

The following officers were elected:

Secretary: John A. Johnson.



Blue Wally den 2den September 1860

Wi Swenskar hafwa denna dag Samman tradt och beslutat förutt genom frivilliga bidrog insamla medel till uppköpandet af ett passande stycke Land — och ändra att på detta Land så snart [illegible] uppbygga en

Swensk Ewangelisk Luthersk Kyrka samt så fort som möjligt om Gud wille bilda en Församling. Och uppmana wi hwar och en det hafwa intrösse för saken, godhetsfulle bidraga att hwad han förmår till uppfyllandet af ofwanstående ändamål och bära dessa bidrog wåra inbetalte innom den förstkommande

November	gjor	betalt		gjor	betalt
namn	$ Cts	$ Cts	namn	$ Cts	$ Cts
N. P. Johnson	5	5.	S. P. Rolander	2 50	2.50
L. Persson	2 50	2.50	Gustaf Johanson	2	2.
C. L. Dahlberg	4	4	[illegible]	×	[illegible]
Petter Carlson	3	3	Mary [illegible]	[illegible]	1.50
John A Johnson	5	5			
John Sanderson	2	2			
David A Johnson	3	3			
Niels Christensen	2	[illegible]			
N. P. Axelson	3	[illegible]			
C. J. Talin	2	2			
Anders V Johnson	2	[illegible]			
Christen Johnson	1	[illegible]			
~~Wm Shannon~~	10				
~~Petter Carlsons barn~~	1				
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]			
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]			

1860 SUBSCRIPTION LIST

Deacons: For three years, N. P. Johnson; for two years, N. P. Axelson; for one year, John Sanderson.

Trustees: For three years, C. J. Dahlberg; two years, John A. Johnson; one year, Melchor Falin.

John Johnson, Chairman
C. J. Dahlberg, Secretary.

We have read and found correct the 18th of October, 1863.

Nels Christensen
David Johnson
S. J. Sanderson.

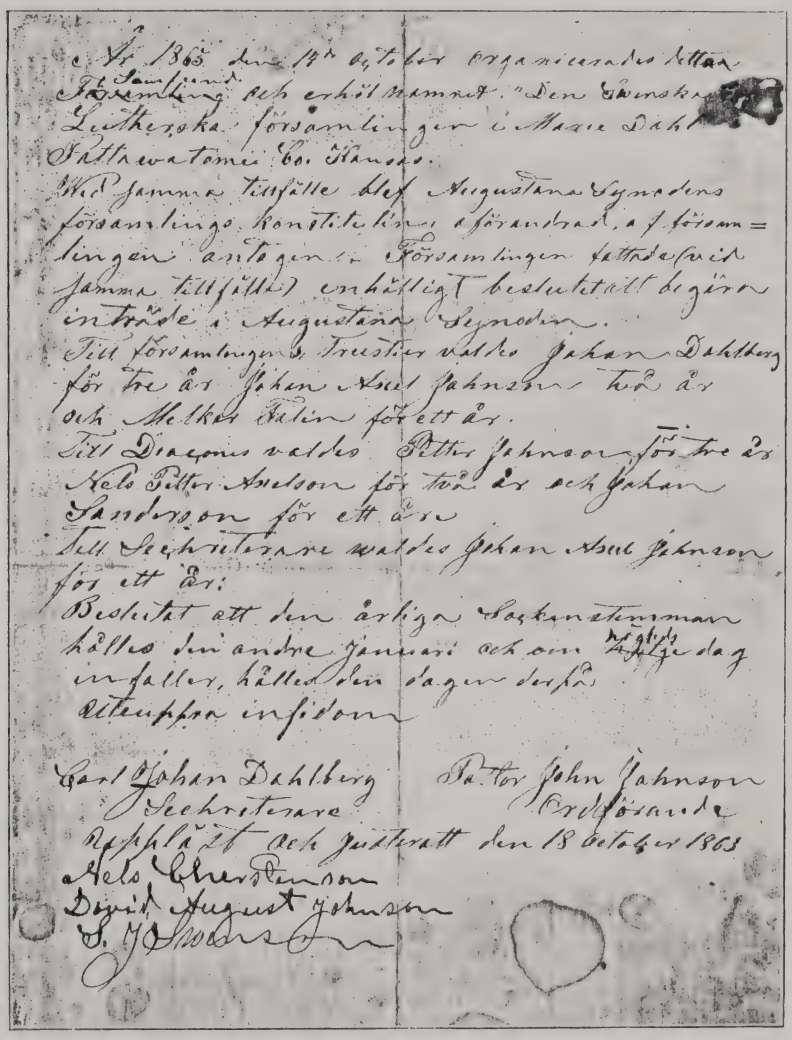
Pastor Johnson stayed in the community for only three weeks as he had his own congregation to care for. The newly organized congregation set about obtaining the church property it had desired for some time. John A. Johnson had by pre-emption taken up the tract of land on which the present Church property is located. He sold this plot of thirty acres to the congregation on November 2, 1863 for the sum of forty-two dollars. The legal transfer of the property is recorded in Pottawatomie County, Book D, page 157.

About 1864, John Ekblad, N. A. Peterson, Samuel Anderson, S. P. Johnson, and other settlers came. In 1867 several more families, among them Andrew Mellgren, John Mellgren, Sven, Charles and Jacob Velen, Magnus Vilander and William Peterson, came to quicken the growth of the community.

The next visit from a Lutheran pastor was in 1865 when Rev. Hokan Olson came to them. He stayed only a few days. The last Sunday of his visit he conducted Holy Communion service in the woods about a mile southeast of the present Church. An offering of $110 was lifted at that meeting, one of the largest in the congregation for many years.

In the fall of that year, Pastor B. M. Halland visited Mariadahl. He, too, accomplished much in the short time of three weeks. He taught and confirmed a class, preached and held a congregational meeting for the purpose of calling a permanent pastor. It was decided that the pastor would be paid three hundred dollars, receive free house and firewood, 30 bushels of wheat and 100 bushels of corn. Student P. Erickson was called but declined.

At the annual meeting in January, 1866, the congregation decided to build a Church. These pioneers did not have much



År 1863 den 14de October organiserades detta Samfund och erhöl namnet "Den Swenska Lutherska församlingen i Marie Dahl Fattawatomie Co. Kansas.
Wid samma tillfälle blef Augustana Synodens församlings konstitution, aförandrad, af församlingen antagen. Församlingen fattade (vid samma tillfälle) enhälligt beslutet att begära inträde i Augustana Synoden.
Till församlingens Trustier valdes Johan Dahlberg för tre år Johan Axel Johnson två år och Melker Falin för ett år.
Till Diaconus valdes Petter Johnson för tre år Nels Petter Axelson för två år och Johan Sanderson för ett år.
Till Sechreterare valdes Johan Axel Johnson för ett år:
Beslutat att den årliga Sockenstemman hålles den andre Januari och om högtids dag infaller, hålles den dagen derpå
Attcuppra infidom

Carl Johan Dahlberg
Sechreterare

Pastor John Johnson
Ordförande

Rapplåst och justeratt den 18 October 1863
Nels Cherstenson
David August Johnson
S. J. Swenson

MINUTES OF FIRST MEETING
Oct. 14, 1863

money, but they did have vision and foresight, and a willingness to work. From the hills they quarried stone, from the woods they cut their oak beams. As the men hauled, cut and laid the stone in place, they envisioned the joy of worshiping, soon, in this little temple. Their work progressed rapidly and within a year's time the church was so nearly completed that it could be used for services. The people had to sit on planks for a while, but they did not mind that.

In the spring of 1866, Pastor A. W. Dahlsten visited the congregation and held several services and also received new members into the congregation. It is interesting to note the generosity of the people who at one of the services gave an offering of $42 to the Children's Home in Andover, Ill., while right here at home they were just beginning work on a Church which would need their hard-earned dollars.

Pastor Hokan Olson and family again visited Mariadahl in the summer of 1866, and during his visit another congregational meeting was held for the purpose of calling a pastor. Pastor Olson was chosen as candidate, but he was not sure that it was in keeping with God's plan for him. He suggested calling Rev. J. P. Lundblad. Pastor Lundblad accepted the call and arrived early in 1867. During his stay the first parsonage, a little stone structure, was built. The congregation fell into debt trying to build a church, a parsonage and support a pastor. In 1869 Pastor Lundblad left.

Rev. Olof Olson came from Salina in 1869 to preach and minister to the people. In the fall of 1870, a home missionary, A. P. A. Lindahl, was sent here. Rev. S. G. Larson also visited Mariadahl that year.

The Kansas Conference was organized in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1870. The second annual meeting of that conference was held in Mariadahl, April, 1871. One layman and two pastors, Dr. Olof Olson and Rev. A. W. Dahlsten, were present. At this meeting the ministers advised the congregation to request the synod to send Pastor S. P. A. Lindahl to them as temporary pastor. He came and worked with great zeal in this congregation and in outlying fields. Here he taught a large confirmation class which he also confirmed. He was extended a call as permanent pastor, but this he could not accept, and Mariadahl's high hopes for a true and godly pastor were dashed for the time being.

Meanwhile, the men were busy completing the church interior. The planks of the first few years were replaced by home-made walnut pews in 1871. These pews were used until 1884. Some of them are still in the possession of the congregation.

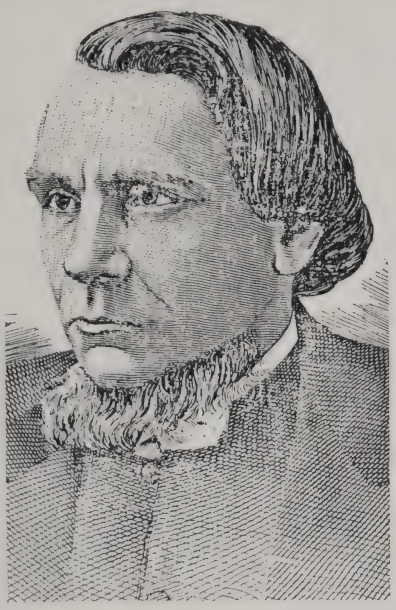
Student T. O. Linell served the congregation during the first half of 1872. Rev. John Seleen accepted a call to become Mariadahl's second pastor and arrived in the fall of 1872. For four years he served ably and faithfully here and in the surrounding mission districts. The large stone part of the parsonage was built during his stay. It is still in good condition.

The old love for Hokan Olson had not cooled and the congregation extended him another call August 4, 1876. To their great joy he accepted the call and arrived in the fall. Of Pastor Olson, Rev. C. E. Elving writes in the MINNESCRIFT: "Pastor Hokan Olson was not an ordinary person. He was a man of gigantic strength and a tireless worker. He was thoroughly familiar with the Bible and knew most of it by heart. He preached mightily. When he found eager listeners he rejoiced, giving God the glory, ascribing no praise to himself."

Pastor Olson's work here was difficult. He served the large Walsburg and Olsburg communities as well as Mariadahl. After seven years on this field, he resigned in the summer of 1883. The congregation could not see how it could exist without a pastor and issued a call without delay. It was declined. Nine other calls received negative answers. Discouraged and almost without hope, the congregation turned again to Pastor Hokan Olson and he again accepted their call, returning in 1886.

During his first term of service, the important institution of mercy, the Mariadahl Children's Home, was established in 1879. All through the years following, our Church nurtured spiritually the children living there.

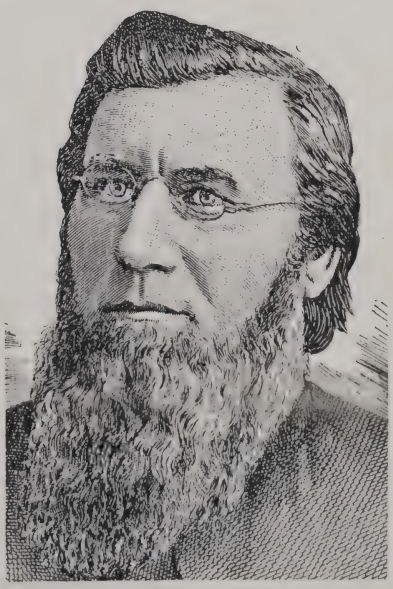
At many an annual meeting the men would ask each other if it were not time that the Church tower be built. Committees were appointed to look into the matter, but they did not come to any decision until 1882 when Andrew Haff, a lay-preacher, came to Olsburg from Vilas, Kansas. He drew plans for the tower and John Ekblad supervised the mason work, assisted by his brothers, Frank and August, and others. By March 1884, when the Conference again met in Mariadahl, the Church was ready with tower, bell, pulpit and new pews.



REV. JOHN JOHNSON ,
Princeton, Ill.
Who organized Mariadahl Congregation

REV. J. P. LUNDBLAD
First pastor, 1867-1869

REV. JOHN SELEEN
Second pastor, 1872-1876



REV. HOKAN OLSON
Third pastor, 1876-1883 and 1886-1889

The congregation had hoped that Pastor Olson would continue serving them as long as he lived, but in 1889 he relinquished his duties on this field.

In the spring of 1890 a theological student, O. Mefferd, served the congregation very satisfactorily. He was given a call to become its pastor. He accepted and assumed his duties after ordination, 1891. Unfortunately, the young man was in poor health. He served to the best of his ability until tuberculosis took his life. He had served for less than a year. He was the first pastor to be buried in the Mariadahl Cemetery.

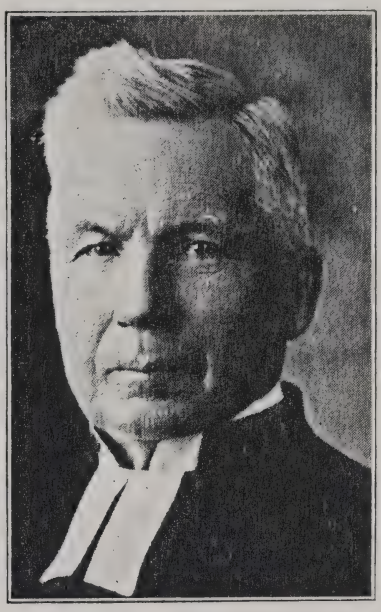
Again, the congregation had to issue call after call until eleven had been sent, only to receive negative answers. A second call to Rev. L. J. Sundquist was accepted. He came to the field with some misgivings, but he stayed for ten years. He remained in this pastorate long enough to develop the congregation into a stronger and more efficient organization. The days of pioneering were over. Mariadahl had reached maturity. During Pastor Sundquist's stay here the frame addition was built on the parsonage. In 1900 the south wing was added to the Church. The Kansas Conference held its convention here the same year. Rev. Sundquist resigned in 1904 and left in November of that year.

A call was now extended to Dr. C. J. E. Haterius of San Francisco, California. He accepted and arrived here Good Friday, April 21, 1905. Dr. Haterius was not a stranger in Mariadahl. He had served as a student many years before, 1877-1878, teaching in the Swedish Church School. He had married Rev. Hokan Olson's daughter, Olivia. Dr. Haterius and Olivia Olson; J. W. Johnson and Alma Bjorklund had a double wedding in Mariadahl Church, January 12, 1879.

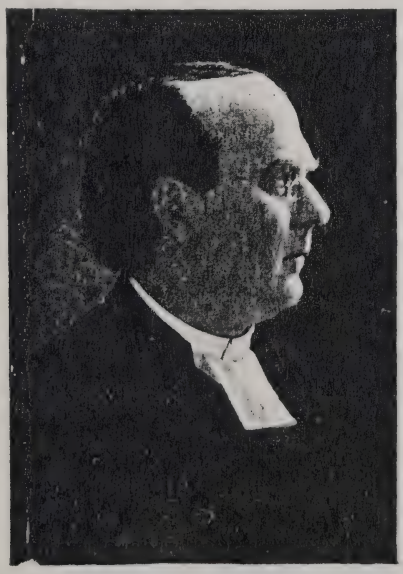
Dr. and Mrs. Haterius arrived while their children were young and they could be together as a family. During the many years of his stay the children grew up and have fond memories of Mariadahl in their hearts. Dr. Haterius was a scholar and preacher of outstanding ability. The Mariadahl people may count themselves fortunate to have had the privilege of sitting at the feet of this teacher. He revealed the power of the Word, the sins of men, but he could also direct the repentant sinner to a living Christ who was willing to save.

Dr. Haterius served the Mariadahl parish longer than any

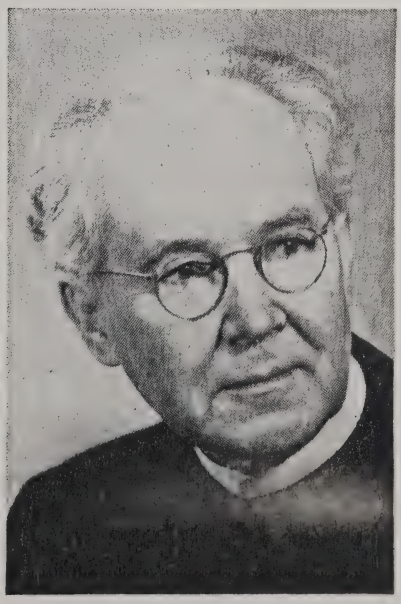
REV. O. E. MEFFERD
Fourth pastor, 1891-1892



REV. L. J. SUNDQUIST
Fifth pastor, 1894-1904



DR. C. J. E. HATERIUS
Sixth pastor, 1905-1920



REV. CARL E. LUNDGREN
Seventh pastor, 1923-1925

other pastor. He loved the people of the valley. He admired its setting in nature. The Blue Valley is one of the beauty spots of the state. Here it was restful to the great thinker, and here he could sit and meditate, undisturbed. He expressed often, "Here I wish to live, die, and be buried."

Sunday morning, September 12, 1920, as the church bell pealed its melodious tones over the valley, the angel of death came to usher him to worship in the church triumphant. His mortal remains were laid to rest in God's blessed acre, Mariadahl Cemetery.

Rev. C. E. Lundgren of Marquette, Michigan was now called to Mariadahl. He accepted and came here in September, 1922. He served Mariadahl but a few years, yet he left an indelible impression on the congregation. Earnestly and sincerely, with deep devotion to his God, he taught and admonished. His face showed he had been with Jesus.

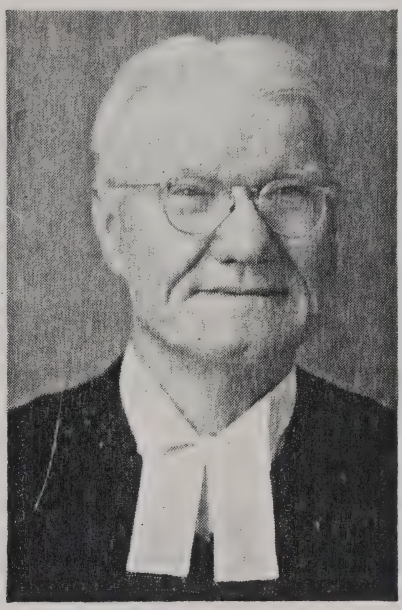
Rev. C. Wilbur Nelson was our next pastor. He had served the United Lutheran Church in Greenleaf, Kansas, prior to his coming here. He came to our parish November 1, 1925. He was admitted to the Augustana Synod at the convention held in Philadelphia in 1926. He was a quick, energetic man. One remembers his brisk walk and firm handshake, ready laugh and genuine friendliness. While he was here he published a monthly magazine called the Mariadahl Messenger. March 1, 1931, he moved to Knoxville, Illinois.

In the fall of 1931 the congregation extended a call to Rev. Otto O. Oleen of Ashtabula, Ohio. The Board of Directors of the Mariadahl Children's Home desired that the pastor of Mariadahl Church also serve as superintendent of the Home. By agreement, the congregation and the Home sent a joint call to Rev. Oleen which he accepted. Pastor and Mrs. Oleen and their family came to Mariadahl, July 14, 1932.

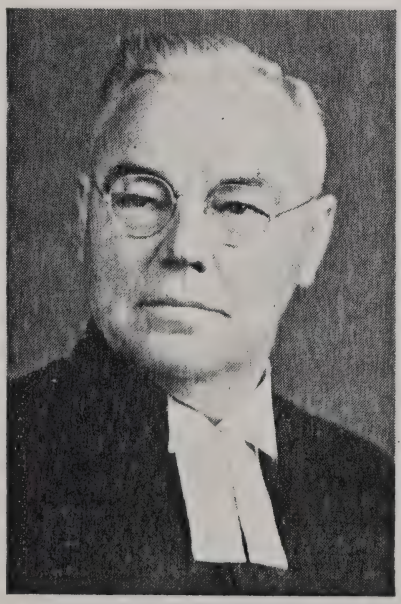
Rev. Oleen, together with his wife, worked untiringly as superintendent of the Home. He got it out of debt and he and his wife took in the children who were too young or otherwise unacceptable for admittance to the Children's Home. In the fourteen years of their stay they had cared for twelve such children. They also applied their abundant drive and energy to serving the congregation.

During this time, in spite of war years and shortage of man-

REV. C. WILBUR NELSON
Eighth pastor, 1925-1931



REV. OTTO O. OLEEN
Ninth pastor, 1932-1946



REV. JOHN BILLDT
Tenth pastor, 1946-1948

REV. A. MALCOLM GUSTAFSON
Eleventh pastor, 1953-1956

power, the Church property was greatly improved. When it became increasingly difficult for the small congregation to meet its financial obligations, Pastor Oleen offered to reduce his salary by $200 a year for both 1940 and 1941. At the same time he assumed responsibility for the Cottage Hill Church where he was assisted in his ministry by Roland Lindahl, a student at Bethany College and a son of the congregation at Mariadahl.

The Swedish versus English language question had long been an issue. In 1935, the Swedish services were discontinued at Mariadahl. We had a Chapel in Cleburne where the Swedish language was continued. Annual reports showed Rev. Oleen's concern lest the language drive the young people away. This seemed already to have happened in the Randolph Chapel where attendance had become so small that services ended, and in 1941 the Chapel was sold to the Assembly of God Church for $625. Later, Cleburne Chapel services died out and in 1949 it was sold for $525. Oak pews from the Randolph Chapel were brought to Mariadahl to replace those which had been purchased in 1884.

To ready the church for the 75th anniversary and the Pastoral Conference in 1938, the men of the Church worked long and hard at excavating a basement, erecting a boulder marker, and laying a stone wall and gates on the south side of the cemetery annex.

The Ekblad Estate had donated land for the extension of the cemetery. The men cleared this land, leveled it, and made it ready for use. The stone gate posts were raised in memory of Mr. and Mrs. John Ekblad. They were completed before the Anniversary. The following year the stone wall along the east edge of the new cemetery was laid.

In 1940 the men dug a cistern and piped water for the kitchen. Later, a top was put over the back stairway to the basement, with the Ladies' Aid, as usual, furnishing the material and paying the costs, while the men did the work and drank the coffee the women furnished them.

In 1942, the Ladies' Aid redecorated the Church interior. The Brotherhood put a new roof on the church and plastered and painted the basement.

In the church records we find the first mention of the impending doom of the Blue Valley when, in his pastoral report

for 1944, Rev. Oleen writes: "This year we have been disturbed by the proposition of constructing a dam on the Big Blue River which, if that is done, would inundate the whole valley and drive us all away from our homes and our church which is so dear to us. We, together with others, have made our protest. May the Lord so lead and guide those in authority that this proposed dam will never be constructed."

Rev. Oleen resigned in the summer of 1945, but the Board of Administration petitioned him to stay on. He remained until June 16, 1946, when he retired. But not for long! He still had a story to tell and a Saviour to show. He took another pastorate near Chanute, Kansas.

Rev. and Mrs. John Billdt were in charge of the Children's Home at the time of Rev. Oleen's resignation. Pastor Billdt, therefore, was asked to serve as pastor of our congregation in addition to his work at the Children's Home.

We found Pastor Billdt a strong leader, inspired by God. We catch a glimpse of his character in the challenge he flung out in his pastoral report of January, 1946:

"Eighty-three years have passed since the early settlers in the Big Blue River valley founded this congregation. They came and labored under God's direction. They went through many privations but they forged ahead in the name of the Lord. . . . We are their children of the second and third generations. We are heirs to their accomplishments. It has been handed down to us as a most sacred trust for us to stewardize. While this is true, there are territories yet to reach and to conquer and possess. The Children of God are forever on the onward march, even to the end of the earth. There is never a halt in God's marching order—it is . . . 'Go ye Forward!' . . . Forward to win the world for Christ and His kingdom. We are included in this divine injunction . . . Go Forward. Let us recount our resources, material and spiritual. They are plenty. Let us, one and all, invest them in the interest of a greater Mariadahl."

All too soon Rev. Billdt resigned from the Children's Home and from Mariadahl Church. Again the congregation had to bid sad farewell to capable people who had accomplished much during their short stay. They still live on in the hearts of those who knew them and still their words and deeds are bearing fruit.

The task of calling a pastor became increasingly difficult because many pastors with a growing family did not want to live in the country, away from schools, and many others did not feel qualified to take on the heavy duties of superintending the Children's Home in addition to pastoral duties, but our congregation could not support a pastor without the help from the Home.

We were to wait five long years before a pastor would come. But, because of God's guiding and protecting Hand, we obtained Rev. C. G. Bloomquist of Olsburg as our vice-pastor. He served us in that capacity from June, 1948 to December, 1951.

A gifted minister whose years of experience and trials mellowed and enriched his sermons and his dealings with people, Rev. Bloomquist by his deeds belied the claim some people make that it takes a young preacher to give vigor and inspiration to a congregation. He gave of his time richly to Mariadahl congregation, far above the amount that would be required of a vice-pastor, even during the sad and trying time of Mrs. Bloomquist's illness and death.

While Pastor Bloomquist was vice-pastor we celebrated our 85th anniversary. At this festivity a free-will offering of $1,300 was received for which an oil-burning furnace was installed, and a considerable amount left to be used for other improvements.

In 1949 property and equipment were improved in the amount of approximately $2,200. The organ was rebuilt, the kitchen enlarged and improved, the floors of the church sanded and refinished, and the whole building re-wired.

Mariadahl was host to the Kansas Conference Women's Missionary Society, May 10, 1950.

At Rev. Bloomquist's suggestion the Ladies' Aids of the neighboring congregations had Guest Days for one another, deepening friendships and promoting neighborliness.

Rev. Bloomquist preached at Mariadahl the first and fifth Sundays of each month and Pastor Lundquist of Walsburg the second and fourth Sundays, and on the third Sunday our congregation was to worship with Olsburg. During the summers of 1948 and 1949 Ralph Van Loon served as student pastor, and in the summers of 1950-1951 Philip Engstrom was our student pastor. He also served the congregation during the Christmas season of 1951.

Pastor Bloomquist worked hard to get a plan by which Mariadahl would be able to obtain a pastor. The two-church parish plan, in which we would join with the Olsburg Lutheran Church was studied thoroughly by committees from both churches together with Pastors Bloomquist and Lundquist. The plans were drawn up and ready for adoption at the annual meetings of the two churches in 1952. Feeling that his work was thus completed, Rev. Bloomquist resigned, Dec. 12, 1951.

In his last annual report to the congregation, Rev. Bloomquist writes: "The disastrous flood of last summer, from which many of our members suffered financially in a distressing degree, brought renewed agitation for Tuttle Creek Dam. It has caused and still is causing us grave concern. Its construction, according to the plans of Army Engineers, would practically obliterate both church, the Home, and our church constituency. Our membership has been on the front line fighting valiantly with a host of others in this whole watershed for a far better method of controlling the excess water flow. The battle is by no means won. We hope and pray that a flood control and soil conservation program will be devised which will preserve for us and our children that which we rightfully value so highly and thus save from disintegration this Lutheran Christian community."

Pastor Lundquist of Walsburg took over the work of vice-pastor when Rev. Bloomquist left. In 1952 the two-church parish issued calls to three pastors. All declined.

In the summer of 1952 Mariadahl united with nine other Lutheran Churches in forming the Riley County Lutheran Hospital Association. The Riley County Hospital is located in Manhattan, Kansas.

In 1953 the Parish issued a call to senior seminarian, A. Malcolm Gustafson, to become its pastor. He accepted and assumed his duties August 1. The task awaiting him was a large one, ready to test his stamina, for it was he who had to initiate the work of a two-church parish. He arrived the year Mariadahl would celebrate her 90th anniversary, Olsburg was planning extensive church improvements, and the Children's Home would be happy for any assistance he could give. Later he was to become acting superintendent of that Home.

And under it all were the tensions and concerns of the Valley

DR. A. THEODORE EKBLAD
First pastor ordained from Mariadahl

DR. O. J. JOHNSON
Second pastor ordained from Mariadahl

REV. C. O. MORLAND
Third pastor ordained from Mariadahl

REV. JOHN J. RICHARD
Fourth pastor ordained from Mariadahl

people who were keeping close watch on Congress concerning developments of Tuttle Creek Dam.

In the fall of 1952 construction which had begun on the dam was ordered halted. Pastor Gustafson writes concerning this: "Much rejoicing is evident as the Engineers and their crews left the area recently. Much prayer is yet in order and much diligence in the task of watching 'the sleeping dog' so that he does not rise up again."

Soon Congress again began to consider appropriating money for work on the dam. The choking fears for the destruction of the valley numbed our spirits. It meant wiping out our cherished church, our community where our forefathers homesteaded. It meant destroying the cemetery, that hallowed place where Pastor Haterius and others had expressed a wish to remain until Judgment Day. Then, after the first shock came the realization that God was still on the throne. We who call ourselves Christian should surely trust Him. Without His will, the Valley would not be destroyed.

Then came some of the greatest evenings in the Valley's history as people of all denominations gathered by the hundreds on the picturesque hillsides for prayer and hymnsings. Just to look over the beautiful valley with its lush fields and sturdy stone dwellings as the sun was setting was awe-inspiring. Singing together, praying together, and listening to the speakers made one feel much nearer to God. His benediction rested over all. Prayer meetings were held, too, every evening while our delegation was in Washington pleading our cause. Many of us felt that God would surely spare our Valley. Therefore, when the appropriations for Tuttle Creek Dam were approved by Congress all of the Valley felt despair and grief. For it all seemed so unjust, blaming our river for flooding which it could not have done.

Through these turbulent days, Pastor Gustafson worked with us and struggled with the grave Tuttle Creek problem. We, therefore, felt a great loss and added grief when he resigned in December, 1956. But his continued concern for us showed in many ways. In the minutes for January 19, 1957, his pastoral report contains:

"We again walk in perilous times. It would seem that those outside our area would send us to a watery grave. We are

REV. PHILIP R. EKBLAD
Fifth pastor ordained from Mariadahl

REV. REUBEN E. CARLSON
Sixth pastor ordained from Mariadahl

REV. CARL E. HATERIUS
Seventh pastor ordained from Mariadahl

REV. D. BERTIL GUSTAFSON
Eighth pastor ordained from Mariadahl

again challenged as work is resumed on the controversial site of Tuttle Creek Dam. . . . One of my greatest concerns is how your faith shall be affected by this action that is taking place. Should water rest in this place a few years from now—shall it cause disbelief in a man's heart and hatred in his bones? Shall a man point to heaven and say 'God did it'? Let us never forget that more precious than land, or home, or tradition is our spiritual soul, our faith, our hope. God has granted these to you. Guard them jealously. 'Fear not them who can destroy the body but are not able to kill the soul, but fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.' Matt. 10:28."

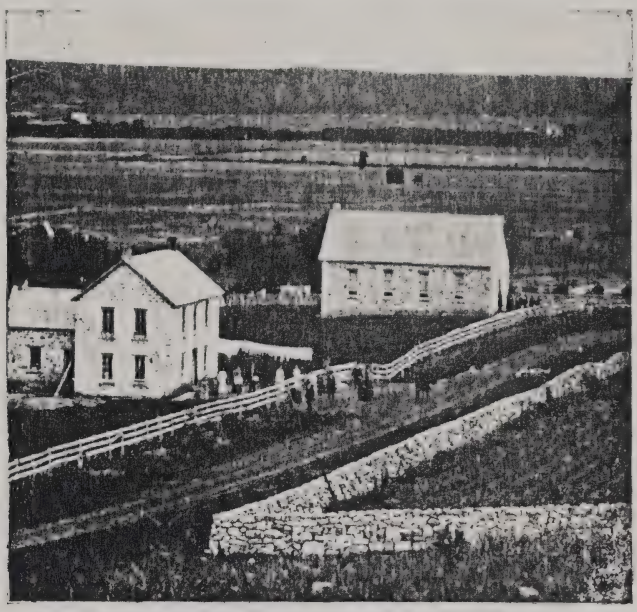
Concerned lest we be left without a spiritual leader in these trying days, Pastor Gustafson arranged to have a new pastor called at an early date, and consulted with Dr. Hedeen as to whom to send a call. He, himself, contacted Rev. Glenn Stenholm to find out if he would come to see the field and consider a call. Pastor Stenholm was called and accepted. He arrived May 5, 1957.

From the first of January to May 5, Rev. Rudolph Moehring, a retired Lutheran pastor living in Manhattan, served as interim pastor.

Rev. Moehring, an earnest and devoted Christian, served the parish faithfully. He prayed fervently for the spiritual well-being of the people. He and his wife endeared themselves to the whole congregation during their brief ministry here.

Rev. Stenholm finds much responsibility placed on his shoulders. His is the work of serving the congregation for as long as it shall exist. His is the task of challenging, encouraging and interceding for the members of Mariadahl when they must go out to seek other homes, other friends, and other church homes. They must make many adjustments. They must leave the places of their dearest memories, and the fellowship of this close-knit congregation. There will be times when they will say as did the captive Israelites, "How can we sing in a foreign land?" They will need a strong faith and a vision of great spiritual heritage.

Our congregation has never been very large. In his annual report for 1957, Rev. Stenholm records 80 communicant members. There have never been many more than 100. But, because it is small, it can work together well. When someone is



PARSONAGE 1867 OLD CHURCH 1866

Church built in 1866. Parsonage large part built in 1872, small part in 1867.

not in Church on Sunday morning everyone misses him, and inquires why he was absent. Perhaps that is why our average attendance is over seventy-five per cent, much higher than that of most congregations. The members are liberal givers, too. Perhaps the largest offering was that in 1954 when the Advance for Christ offering amounted to $4,742.50.

God has been good, so good to Mariadahl. He has sent to us pastors who have been dedicated men of God, and have labored untiringly, each in his own way, for the upbuilding of God's Kingdom. And how can a man live amid this beauty, every morning new, and not praise his Maker for it all and for the abundant yield of the soil which he tills?

The congregation is made up predominantly of farm people. These farm homes have produced an abundance of public school teachers. At the present time eleven of our members are actively engaged in teaching. From these homes have also come

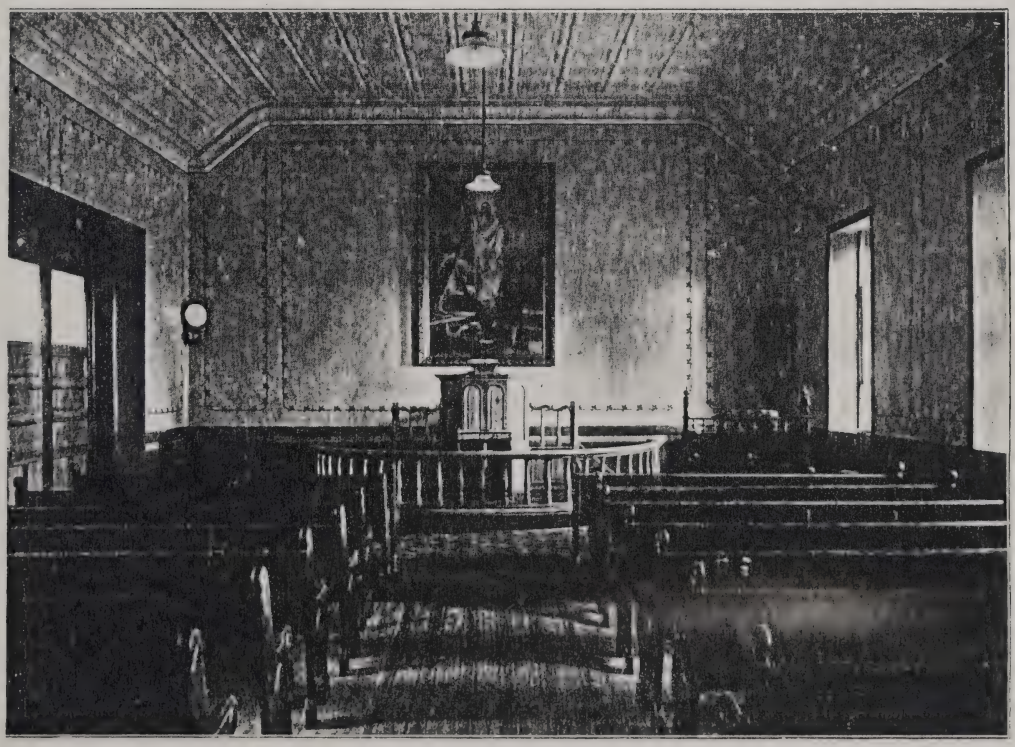
nurses, doctors, chemists, bankers, technicians, statisticians, and architects.

From these farm homes, throughout Mariadahl's history have come eight pastors: Dr. A. Theodore Ekblad, Dr. O. J. Johnson, Rev. J. J. Richard, Rev. C. O. Morland, Rev. Philip R. Ekblad, Rev. Reuben Carlson, Rev Carl E. Haterius, Rev. Bertil Gustafson.

Two sons of the congregation became medical missionaries: Dr. Hobart Johnson to Africa and Dr. Emery Carlson to China.

Four daughters have become Pastors' wives: Mrs. C. E. Elving, Mrs. J. A. Holmen, Mrs. G. A. Grahn, and Mrs. Oliver Lindeblad. Ruby Johnson served as Parish Worker for five years.

The Bible says of the last days of Moses: "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." By God's grace, the same can be said of Old Mariadahl. Her natural force is not abated.



OLD INTERIOR ABOUT 1900

PARTIAL VIEW OF THE CEMETERY AND CHURCH
The tallest stone—left center—marks the grave of Maria Johnson.

God's guiding Hand is here. His plan, though dimly sensed, is being carried out, and His voice speaks to us as it did to Joshua: "Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Joshua 1:9.

THE BLUE RIVER HAZARDS

WHEN one hears modern excuses for not attending church services, they sound so very flimsy when one hears what some church members once went through to attend.

The Blue River divided our congregation and sometimes presented quite a problem. During the earlier years the river was forded. Certain high-water marks were carefully watched. Yet, sometimes, water came into the vehicles, making it necessary for the driver to brace his feet on the dash, and the youngsters to scurry to their knees on the seats. As the uncertainty of the state of the drives up and down the banks increased it became evident that a "church boat" was needed. This held some eight or ten adults, with a few children thrown in. It also made it necessary to be on time, as late arrivals were apt to find themselves faced with a trip home without attending church services.

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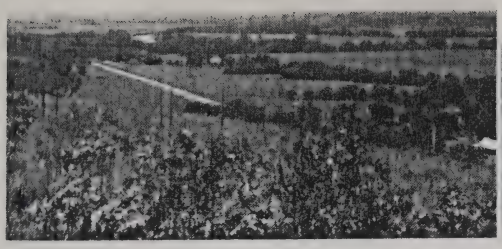
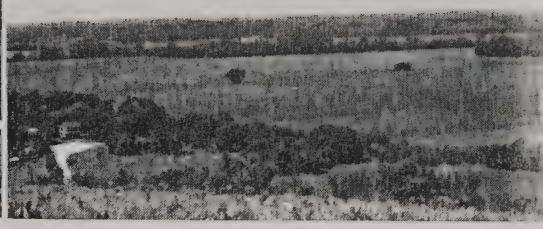
Many close calls occurred, as when two sisters, Mary Allen and Esther Christensen, dressed for some special occasion, were riding in the boat. An eddy or whirlpool caused an oar to break and the boat tipped enough to spill them into the water.

On Christmas morning 1885, three families, namely Mr. and Mrs. Magnus Vilander, Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Carlson, and Mr. and Mrs. John Swanson, were going to Mariadahl for "Julotta." They were in a wagon crossing the frozen river. When they neared the east bank the ice gave way and all the people and the team of horses went into the water. They all managed to get out except Mrs. Carlson, who was not found until the last of March. When the ice broke up, her body was found on a sandbar about two miles below Randolph. Mrs. Carlson was the mother of Mrs. Peter Fernstrom. She was the grandmother of Elmer Fernstrom, who came to Cleburne with the UP Railroad in 1886, and who graciously submitted these facts.

No exact data could be found about another church member, fifteen-year-old Hulda Seaberg, who was drowned as she and her father attempted to ford the river that had risen suddenly. The father hung on to the reins and the horses pulled him to safety.

In 1905 or 1906, Mrs. C. J. E. Haterius took up the cause of having a bridge built across the river not far from the church.

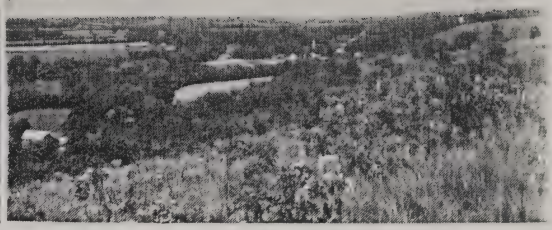



VIEWS AND SCENES OF THE BLUE VALLEY NEAR THE

With untiring efforts soliciting almost $5,000 from friends and members, and putting it before the county commissioners of both counties, she finally managed to get consent for the erection of the bridge. It was said the county commissioners made themselves scarce if they saw her in time! One remarked, "Well, if it were a man, we could get rid of him, but a woman!" So our bridge was built and the members on the west side were free to come at any time they chose.

Then, in the cold winter of 1911-1912 our great ice-break tore out the bridges at Cleburne, Mariadahl, and weakened the one at Randolph. One pier of the bridge remained standing, but the old church boat was again put to use. A ferry-box was suspended from two cables strung across the gap. This was pulled by hand. Then, Conrad Ekblad having his choring on the west side of the river, found it inconvenient to drag the big box several times a day and constructed a small, light "flat" which rode on top of the cables.

On the night of our Christmas-tree program (an event always held on December 26), two adults, Alfred Carlson and Gunnard Carlson (no relation), with four children, Fritz and Hazel Carlson and Agnes and Bernard Isaacson, started over on the ferry-box. Two other men, Oscar Carlson (brother of Gunnard) and John Linder, decided to take the small flat and set out. The lower cable slipped enough to cause the boxes to tilt at a steep angle. Mr. Carlson, guiding the ferry, held on, but when he saw his two children in the water below, he also dropped in. The other children were caught or held on to the



RCH—BETWEEN CLEBURNE AND RANDOLPH

box. The two men in the flat were also pitched into the water; one head first, as the sand in his hair indicated. The two hanging on the box were rescued by Oscar Linder, who was still on the west side. He climbed hand over hand out to the box, calmed the children and guided the ferry back to the approach. Although ice was floating on the river, none of the participants experienced any ill-effects from their icy dips.

In 1913 or 1914, the present bridge was erected. At the time of the building of the first bridge it was argued that they could not build a bridge for a few "Church members," but it must have proven its worth, as this bridge was erected without a murmur.

During the time the Cleburne bridge was out a large ferryboat there capsized in high water, and four men, Paul Smith, Godfrey Gustafson, Albert Holt and the ferryman Mr. Fritzson were all pitched into the ice-filled waters. Mr. Holt was rescued by Mr. Sig Palmer, then postmaster of Cleburne. This incident took place on the 18th of March, 1912.

THE BOULDER MARKER

The Mariadahl community is the oldest Swedish settlement in Kansas. The congregation also is the first in the state. It was felt that a marker should be raised to preserve to posterity a record of these historical events.

December 25, 1937, five men, Anton Johnson, Amel Johnson, Emil Bjorling, Wilfrid Johnson, and Rev. Oleen went out to scout the hills and find a suitable boulder for such a marker. After some twenty stones had been examined, one stone was found lying on top of the ground in the Peter Mellgren's pasture. It was satisfactory to all, but how to move a stone weighing nine tons was the problem.

On January 25, 1938, this stone was moved eight miles and placed in position. It is nine feet long and twelve feet around. It was loaded on a house-moving truck, pulled by a caterpillar tractor.

On the marker are two bronze inscriptions:

I

Mariadahl Lutheran Congregation
of the Augustana Synod
organized by
Rev. John Johnson
of Princeton, Ill. Oct. 14, 1863
The oldest Swedish Lutheran
Church West of Missouri River
and the first in Kansas
Erected in the year of 1866
"Have Faith in God." Mark 11, 22

II

John A. Johnson
first Swede to settle in Kansas
June 20, 1855
Born in Sweden July 30, 1831—Died June 27, 1893

John Wm. Johnson	Clara J. Dahlberg
Born Dec. 30, 1856	Born Nov. 11, 1857

First Kansas-born children
of Swedish parents
"Keep Thy Heart with All Diligence." Prov. 4. 23.

THE OLD OAK BEAM

When the basement was constructed in 1938, the old oak beam under the center of the church was taken out and replaced by a steel beam. The oak beam, roughly hewn out by hand, was placed there in 1866. It was still in good condition after seventy-two years of service, and from it J. A. Nordquist, of Waterville, Kansas, made a beautiful baptismal font and four flower pedestals. The inside stair treads from the basement were also made from the same beam. There were 220 rings in the beam, indicating the age of the tree from which it was cut. J. A. Nordquist, who lived as a boy a few miles from Mariadahl Church, became orphaned when lightning struck his home and killed the whole family except this boy, then seven years old.

KANSAS CONFERENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN AUGUSTANA SYNOD

The Kansas Conference was organized in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1870. The second annual convention of the Conference was held in Mariadahl, April 14 to 16, 1871. The two pastors present were Dr. Olof Olsson and Rev. A. W. Dahlsten. The Kansas Conference also included Nebraska. It was at the Kansas Conference meeting in Mariadahl, in 1884, that the pastors and congregations of Nebraska decided to separate from Kansas and form the Nebraska Conference.

General conference conventions with both clerical and lay delegates have been held in Mariadahl Lutheran Church in the years 1871, 1884, and 1900. Pastoral conferences with only pastors in attendance have been held here in the years 1910, 1923, and 1938.

CHURCH BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

MARIADAHL CHURCH BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

Deacons

1. Peter Johnson
2. C. J. Dahlberg
3. J. Sanderson
4. N. P. Axelson
5. Gustaf Johnson
6. O. Anderson
7. P. Carlson
8. August Ekblad
9. C. Velin
10. J. Velin
11. C. Hakanson
12. Andre Quist
13. J. O. Johnson
14. Rudin E. Hanson
15. A. Samuelson
16. Jacob Erikson
17. John Aronson
18. O. Carlson
19. Sven Velin
20. N. A. Peterson
21. B. Berg
22. Gottfred Johnson
23. Olaus Carlson
24. A. P. Soderlund
25. A. Mellgren
26. C. J. Holt
27. John Soderlund
28. David Johnson
29. Frank Youngquist
30. Amil Johnson
31. A. E. Nelson
32. N. H. Youngberg
33. C. J. Holt
34. A. G. Johnson
35. J. W. Johnson
36. Anton Johnson

37. August Carlson
38. Albert Holt
39. Chas. Miller
40. C. R. Ekblad
41. E. H. Erickson
42. Herbert Johnson
43. Albert Nohlen
44. Herman Holt
45. F. A. Velen
46. Elmer Holt
47. Lloyd Carlson
48. Raymond Nelson
49. Warren Carlson
50. Johannes Vandahl
51. Wilfred Johnson, Sr.
52. John Lind
53. John Lindahl
54. Ed Fritz
55. Alvin Holt
56. Gaylord Johnson
57. Eldon Vandahl
58. Roland Lindahl

Trustees

1. C. J. Dahlberg
2. John A. Johnson
3. M. Fallen
4. J. Ekblad
5. J. Floberg
6. V. Johnson
7. W. Peterson
8. N. P. Peterson
9. L. Hakanson
10. G. O. Maxell
11. V. Dahlberg
12. Amel Johnson
13. N. Christensen
14. L. P. Skow
15. P. Ipsen
16. C. J. Holt
17. C. J. Svenson
18. John Mellgren
19. Gottfrey Gustafson
20. A. E. Axelton
21. C. R. Ekblad
22. Albert Nohlen
23. F. A. Velen
24. J. A. Samuelson
25. H. A. Johnson
26. Frank Fritz
27. Philip Ekblad
28. August Burklund
29. Alvin Holt
30. John Lindahl
31. Elmer Holt
32. Chas. Fritz
33. Wilfred Johnson
34. David Gustafson
35. H. W. Johnson
36. Emil Bjorling
37. E. L. Fritz
38. Terrance Johnson
39. Raymond Nelson
40. Walter Vandahl
41. A. H. Rosenberg
42. Dennis Holt
43. Gaylord Johnson
44. Eldon Vandahl
45. Ketchikan Johnson
46. Quinton Esping
47. Vernon Holt
48. Wilfred Johnson, Jr.
49. Keith Anderson
50. Carl Holt
51. Forest Johnson
52. Robert Holt
53. John Erickson
54. Donald Holt
55. Grant Harter

Church Secretaries

C. J. Dahlberg
John A. Johnson
A. V. Johnson
John Ekblad
Neils Christensen
A. Quist
W. Peterson
A. B. Axelton
Victor Dahlberg
Jacob Erickson
Andrew Johnson
G. O. Maxell
J. W. Williams
Amel Johnson
Oscar Floberg
D. W. Johnson
Anton Johnson
Philip Ekblad
N. H. Youngberg
Frank Fritz
A. C. Nelson
Herbert Johnson
Raymond Nelson
Oscar Fritzson
Wilfrid Johnson, Sr.
Warren Carlson
Gaylord Johnson
Wilfrid Johnson, Jr.
Roland Lindahl
Mrs. Vernon Holt
Doris Velen

CHURCH TREASURERS FROM 1906

John Samuelson
Gaylord Johnson
Wilfrid Johnson, Jr.
Robert Holt
Donald Holt

FINANCIAL SECRETARIES

F. S. Gustafson
Gaylord Johnson
Helen Carlson

CONFIRMATION CLASSES OF THE MARIADAHL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Class of 1863, Rev. John Johnson, Pastor

Mrs. John Ekblad, Mrs. August Ekblad, Mrs. A. P. Oman, S. P. Rolander.

Class of 1865, Rev. B. M. Halland, Pastor

Victor Dahlberg, Sophie Rosenberg.

Class of 1871, Rev. S. P. A. Lindahl, Pastor

John Alfred Velen, Emma K. Anderson, Anna M. Anderson, Maria Anderson, Josephine Jacobson, Mathilda Jacobson, J. W. Johnson, Anna May Tilberg, Mrs. G. O. Maxell, Josephine Dahlberg, Christine Larson, Emma Nelson, Christine Anderson, Olle Knudson, Knut Knudson, Bengt Knudson, Alfred Samuelson, John Sjoberg, John Nelson, Augusta Anderson, Mr. Anderson, Tina Jacobson, Fredric Rosenberg, Augusta Palmquist, Tilda Nelson.

Class of 1873, Rev. John Seleen, Pastor

Mrs. Chas. Johnson, Henry Adolph Velen, Mrs. Gottfrid Johnson, Mrs. Kristina Skonberg, Mr. Charlie Carlson, Victor E. Tilberg, A. F. O. Maxell, Klara Monson, Charlotta Velen Hanson, Gustaf Herman Erickson, Gustaf Nordquist, Carl J. Peterson, Carl J. Nelson, Anna Christine Anderson.

Class of 1874, Rev. John Seleen, Pastor

Augusta Peterson, Johan Anderson, J. Sanford Floberg. Karl J. Peterson, Selma A. Nelson, Jonas Ek, Ida W. Ek, Augusta Peterson, Mary Peterson, A. P. Soderlund.

Class of 1875, Rev. John Seleen, Pastor

Olivia Sanderson, Hulda Jacobson, Anna G. Johnson, Alma F. Burklund, Hulda Johnson, August Johnson. Seven not listed.

Class of 1876, Rev. John Seleen, Pastor

Carl Henry Johnson, Stina L. Nordquist, Maria L. Monson, Emma J. Sellberg, August Sellberg, Clara Johnson.

Class of 1877, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Carl Anderson, Stina S. Anderson, Anna Bohgren, Kristina Carlson, John Dahlberg, Emely C. Dahlberg, Maria Gräll, Alma E. Johnson, Mathilda Larson, Mary Larson, Carolina Peterson, Gustava Peterson, Ada W. Sanderson, Albert Sanderson, Carl Soderlund.

Class of 1878, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Emma K. Flohr, John From, John P. Hoger, Albert V. Johnson, Isak Johnson, John Larson, Leni K. Modin, Emmanuel Olson, Ingra Olson, Theodore Olson, Sven P. Peterson, Carl A. Sellberg, Frank O. Soderlund, Wilhelmina Williamson.

Class of 1879, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Ada M. Ek, Oscar F. Anderson, F. Oscar Floberg, John A. Johnson, Emma S. Monson, Emma K. Nilson, K. W. Westling.

Class of 1881, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Alfred Anderson, Maggie Anderson, August Burklund, Frida Carlson, Mary E. Christensen, Amanda M. Dahlberg, John Hedberg, Selma Johnson,

Theodore Johnson, Victor E. Johnson, John L. Jungberg, Josie C. Jacobson, Sven Källson, Victor Larson, A. William Mellgren, O. E. Nelson, Eben Olson, Carl J. Palmquist, Frans O. Peterson, Emma C. Sanderson, Anna E. Swenson, Ovida Williamson.

Class of 1883, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Helena S. Amnell, Amanda Anderson, Clara E. Christenson, August Carlson, Carl Ekstrom, William Floberg, John A. Hanson, Lydia Hanson, Ida Jacobson, Joseph Jacobson, Matilda F. Johnson, Matilda O. Johnson, Mollie Johnson, Sofie Larson, Edward Nelson, Mary Nelson, John Olson, Esther A. Olson, August Peterson, Carl J. Peterson, Frank Söder, Lovisa Soderlund, Frida E. Swanson, Sofie Swanson, Emma Velen.

Class of 1885, Rev. Edman, Pastor

A. G. Johnson, Alma Ephraimson, Hannah Peterson, Clara Knudson, Hilma Holt, Gust Palmquist, Mrs. Homer D. Boles, Emma Ekblad.

Class of 1887, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Mary Appelrot, Carl Carlson, John A. Carlson, Matilda Carlson, George Christensen, Theodore Ekblad, Anna Ellison, Eric Erickson, Tilda Floberg, Jennie Hanson, Mary Hanson, Mary Hedberg, Carrie K. Ipsen, John Jacobson, Axel Johnson, Oscar J. Johnson, Otto Johnson, D. W. Johnson, Frank E. Nelson, Emil Mellgren, Emma Mellgren, Alfrid Peterson, Selma Ros, E. A. Samuelson, William R. Sanderson, Anna Strandberg, Ida Strandberg, John Strandberg, Amanda Mellgren, Carl Sandstrom.

Class of 1888, Rev. Hokan Olson, Pastor

Carl Carlson, William Carlson, Albert Holt, Selma Hultgren, K. A. Sandahl, Christine Swahn, Theodore Velen.

Class of 1890, Rev. Hemborg, Pastor

Victor Anderson, J. C. Christensen, Esther Dahlberg, J. W. Ekblad, Tilda Ephraimson, John Erickson, Hannah Floberg, Ed Gustafson, Oscar Hanson, Emma Holt, Anton Johnson, Henry Johnson, Mr. Liljegren, Hannah Melgren, Hilda Melgren, A. E. Nelson, Helen Nelson, J. E. Patterson, Ed Petterson, Pete Peterson, A. E. Samuelson, Jennie Swanson, F. A. Velen.

Class of 1892, Rev. J. A. Hemborg, Pastor

Ernest Carlson, Fritz Ephraimson, Frida Hill, Herman Holt, Louis Johnson, Martha Johnson, Anna Nelson, Otto Nelson, R. D. Samuelson, Almeda Southerland, Carl Anderson, Carl Johnson.

Class of 1894, Rev. Johanson, Pastor

Emma Bengtson, John Carlson, Fred Christensen, C. R. Ekblad, Axel Floberg, Emil Hedlund, Signe Ipsen, Richard Johnson, C. Johnson, John Linder, J. A. Samuelson, L. F. Samuelson, Albin Swenson Moreland.

Class of 1895, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Willie Bengtson, Bert J. Bengston, Carl H. Carlson, C. J. Carlson, Ella Holt, Axel Johnson, Hilma Johnson, Edwin Lundin, Frans O. Johnson, Leonard Southerlund, Mary Wennerstrom.

Class of 1896, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Mollie Anderson, Hilda Carlson, Cora Ekblad, Alma Ekholm, Arthur

Emanuelson, Freddie Johnson, H. Peter Johnson, Annie Lundin, Albert S. Nelson, Lydia Strand.

Class of 1897, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Hilda Bengston, Florence C. Christensen, George F. Erickson, Ester O. Holt, Arthur E. Hultgren, Anna Hawkinson, Emil P. Nelson, Oscar Rehn, Esther Sandquist, Carl A. Southerlund, Lydia Swenson.

Class of 1898, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Linnea Anderson, Anna Carlson, Anna C. Ekholm, Nora M. Ipsen, Signa J. Ipsen, Alpha V. Johnson, Herbert A. Johnson, Oscar F. Linder, George C. Oline, Carl Palmer, Emma Peterson, Alma Peterson, Henning Roos, Jennie Södersten, Olga Southerlund, Carl Strand.

Class of 1900, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Ester Beck, Irene Beck, Anna J. Carlson, Mary J. Carlson, Edgar Erickson, Elmer F. Holt, Arthur Johnson, Carl R. Lundin, Ettie Maxell, Ida Maxell, Clara Mellgren, Sigrid Nelson, Harvey Noble, William Oleen, Elmer Palmer, Hulda Sodersten, Alvin Southerlund, Eben Sandquist, Alma Swenson, Oscar Mellgren.

Class of 1902, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Paul Almquist, John H. F. Anderson, Minnie Anderson, Alvin Axelton, Otelia Carlson, Agnes Dahlberg, Victor Ekblad, Carl G. Ekholm, Clarence Erickson, Reuben Holt, Anna Hanson, Alice Ipsen, Alice Johnson, Lydia Linder, Josephine Lundquist, Amelia Lundin, Clara V. Peterson, Hilma D. Peterson, Fritchiof Southerlund, Hjalmar Southerlund.

Class of 1903, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Ellen M. Almquist, Amelia Anderson, Esther C. Christensen, Alice E. Dahlberg, Oliver Erickson, Bertha Johnson, Mary Mellgren, Emil J. Monson, Robert A. Peterson, Oscar Wilson.

Class of 1904, Rev. L. J. Sundquist, Pastor

Anna Burklund, Anna Case, Carl Carlson, Philip R. Ekblad, Carl Ipsen, Ellen Hanson, Lillie Lundquist, Ole Oline, Olivia Peterson, Hildegard Josephine Lundquist.

Class of 1907, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Ruth Allen, Lillie A. Axelton, Ruth L. Axelton, Alvin Burklund, Evelyn Blomquist, Oscar Carlson, Evelyn H. Dahlberg, Leslie Dahlberg, Martin Fritz, Eunice Haterius, Carl E. Haterius, Alvin Holt, Amelia Johnson, Ester Linder, Minnie Lundin, James McGrath, Elmer Maxell, Oscar Maxell, Lydia Mellgren, August Lundquist, Mary Lundquist, Reuben Peterson, Inez Youngquist, Clara Lundin.

Class of 1909, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Martin E. Anderson, Carl Fritz, Frank Fritz, Chauncy Haterius, Arthur E. Johnson, Esther K. Lundquist, Agnes H. Lundquist, Anna M. Maxell, Helen Orup, Henry Orup, Everet J. Peterson, Nora K. Peterson, Rudolf J. Ryd, Therese Youngberg, Selma A. Johnson.

Class of 1911, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Carrie A. Anderson, Julius Barnes, Martin Burklund, Richard Burklund,

Linnea Carlson, Carl Eber Carlson, Agnes Hedlin, Carl H. Johnson, Ruth E. Johnson, Ruth McGrath, Theodore Mellgren, Carl Nohlen, Carl Orup, Erick M. Anderson.

Class of 1913, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Tom R. Barnes, Eva A. Burklund, Walfrid Carlson, Mildred Johnson, Carl L. Johnson, Ralph Johnson, Joel H. Mellgren, Hanna Orup.

Class of 1914, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Edward L. Fritz, N. Axel Johnson, Sigfrid Johnson, Harold Johnson, Lawrence Nelson, Oscar Nelson, George Nohlen, Alfrid Nordeen, Waldemar Magnuson, Hilda Stephens, Pearl Youngberg, George Nordeen.

Class of 1916, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Hazel Carlson, Hans Haterius, Evelyn Hedlin, Ethel Johnson, Adelia Johnson, Emily Mellgren, Anna Nohlen, Gottfrid Johnson, Arnold Magnuson.

Class of 1918, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Ellen Blomdahl, Julius Anderson, Amy Burklund, Hulda Carlson, Willie Hedlin, Agnes Isaacson, Bernard Isaacson, Elenore Johnson, Harold C. Johnson, Pearl Jepsen, Anna D. Nelson, Alice Nohlen.

Class of 1920, Dr. C. J. E. Haterius, Pastor

Milburn Axelton, Paul Burklund, Andrew Carlson, Reuben Carlson, Gladys King, George Fritz, Ruby Johnson, Harry Murk, Sevan Magnuson, Theodore Southerlund, Willis Ward, Minnie Olson.

Class of 1922, Rev. J. E. Carlson, Pastor

Cecelia Carlson, Helen Carlson, Gunhild Dahl, Harold Ekdahl, Frances Ekdahl, Hildreth Fritz, Glen Harrison, Wilbur Nelson, Raymond Nelson, Mildred Nohlen, Ruth Nohlen, Euphemia Sundberg, Oscar Ekdahl.

Class of 1923, Rev. Carl E. Lundgren, Pastor

Marie Blomdahl, Lawrence Blomdahl, Margaret Bloomberg, Wayne Bloomberg, Julia Denny, Lawrence Johnson, Norman Lindbloom, Waldon Lindbloom, Reuben Mellgren, Walter Nelson, Esther Nohlen, Opal Palmer, Fanny Tidquist, Lettie May Tryon, Gustaf Murk, Albert Kerr.

Class of 1924, Rev. Carl E. Lundgren, Pastor

Emery Carlson, Dennis Holt, Lucile Johnson, Terrence Johnson, Russell Lundgren.

Class of 1926, Rev. C. Wilbur Nelson, Pastor

Alvin Erickson, Nina Fritz, Flavel Johnson, Margaret Lindahl, Pauline Lundin, Rudolph Mellgren, Della Mullins, Agnes Nohlen, Ethel Nohlen, Carrie Otney, Mary Otney, Doris Palmer, Wesley Peterson, Alphie Swanson, Hugo Tidquist, Enoch Valin, Esther Valin.

Class of 1927, Rev. C. Wilbur Nelson, Pastor

Hilding Anderson, Lester Anderson, Ruth Anderson, Irene Erickson, Thelma Fritz, Roberta Johnson, Ruby Lawson, Kenneth Holt, Evelyn Linn, Doris Lundin, Wilbur Nelson, Jr., Mabel Nohlen, Doris Swanson, George Tidquist.

Class of 1929, Rev. C. Wilbur Nelson, Pastor

LaVern Anderson, Bernice Carlson, Reva Erickson, Vernie Erickson, Wal-

ter Holt, Aileen Johnson, David Johnson, Gaylord Johnson, Ketchikan Johnson, Lorraine Lawson, Marvin Gaither, Florence Lindahl, Bernice Linn, Gretchen Strohm, Leona Velen.

Class of 1933, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Ruth Bjorling, Clara Burton, Marie Doyle, Rachel Erickson, John Erickson, Bertil Gustafson, Helen Holt, Ruth Holt, Vernon Holt, Leighton Johnson, Ruth Linn, George Mullens, Dale Morris, Walter Nydell, Holger Nydell, Anna Oleen, Pearl Sundberg, Elmer Sundberg, Eldon Vandahl, Doris Velen, Bernice Wheeler, David Strohm.

Class of 1935, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Louis Allen, Harvey Doyle, Dolly Buck, Eunice Holt, Lois Holt, Roland Lindahl, Raymond Linn, Donald McConnell, Carl Sundberg, Hazel Cox.

Class of 1937, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Leroy Bjorling, Nora Burton, John Burton, Kenneth Erickson, Harold Fritz, Carl Holt, Ernest Holt, Dorothy Holt, Elna Hanson, Alicia Johnson, Vera Mundell, Mary Thomas.

Class of 1938, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Dorothy Mae Bjorling, Wilfrid Johnson, Jr., Delores Vandahl.

Class of 1939, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

William Brown, Iris Clark, Marjorie Fritz, Elaine Gustafson, Mary Jean Johnson, Anna Miller, Vearl Newman, Edna Oleen, Beverly Weaver, Patricia Weaver.

Class of 1940, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Marcia Becker, Ella George, Donald Holt, Robert Holt, Elmer Jensen, Virginia Moeming, Lula Mae Rose, Eva Scudder.

Class of 1942, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Christine Krey, Rita Lou Toburen, Albert Young, Katherine Young.

Class of 1944, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

David Bates, Betty Lee Boettcher, Richard Boettcher, Victor Krey, John Young.

Class of 1945, Rev. Otto O. Oleen, Pastor

Forrest Johnson, Jean Peterson, Esther M. Vandahl, John Ashley.

Class of 1948, Rev. John Billdt, Pastor

Sherman Ashley, Maxine Murk, Shirley Peterson, Irene Rosenberg.

Class of 1950, Rev. C. G. Bloomquist, Pastor

Darlene Holt, Ramona Nelson, Harvey Walworth, Don Wayne Anderson, Carolyn Peterson, Charles Fuller, Elmer Eggers, J. W. Johnson.

Class of 1953, Rev. Virgil Lundquist, Pastor

Raymond Gaultney, Leroy Young, Fred Harp.

Class of 1955, Rev. A. Malcolm Gustafson, Pastor

Paul Bjorling, Elizabeth Fetty, Roy May, Ruth Ann Swanson, David Vandahl.

Class of 1956, Rev. A. Malcolm Gustafson, Pastor

Mariadahl's class combined with Olsburg. Deanna Holt of Mariadahl was confirmed in Olsburg.

Organizations

MARIADAHL SUNDAY SCHOOL

The place of the Sunday School in the promotion of Christian education has always been, and always will be, most vital in the lives of all Christians and every forward-looking Church must be a teaching institution. The Swedish founders of Mariadahl early realized that the future of the Church rests, in no small measure, upon the spiritual training of the growing generation. Records do not show the exact date of the formal organization of the Sunday School but from older members of the Church we find that it did have a very early beginning. That beginning, of necessity, was very modest with few in number and, of course, all instruction was in the Swedish language. The last confirmation class confirmed in Swedish was 1920.

Shortly after the founding of the Children's Home (called the Orphan Home at that time) in 1879, the Sunday School gradually increased in size, both as to the numbers of children in attendance, the number of classes, and the size of the teaching staff. Under Mr. Bengt Berg as superintendent in 1888-1895, great strides forward were made. Rev. L. J. Sundquist took over after Superintendent Berg. This education-minded man carried on well the work started, and since then many Christian men and women have led the work of the Sunday School as superintendents. It is very interesting to observe that up until the time it stopped functioning in 1957, the Children's Home brought all its children to the Sunday School and services at Mariadahl—thus lending much toward making the Church school better both in quantity and quality.

Sunday School services were usually held from May through December leaving out the worst winter months as it was very difficult to get to Church during that time of the year. In the 1930's the peak enrollment of 88 was reached. Under Supt. John Billdt in 1947, we began the present plan of holding Sunday School throughout the year. In 1947, 75 members were in attendance with an average enrollment of 68. During the past 10 years, the size of the Sunday School has greatly decreased and at the present time there is an enrollment of 15 children with

SUNDAY SCHOOL
Eldon Vandahl, Superintendent

four classes for them. There are also classes for young adults and for the older members of the congregation.

Even though the size of the Sunday School has usually been small it has produced active Church members who have given of their talents in many ways in carrying on the work of the Church school.

Weekday vacation Bible School has been held the past few years offering children a place to obtain further training of Christian character.

May the Lord bless the work of the Sunday School and use it to further the spreading of the Gospel.

Following is a list of those who have served as superintendents:

Mr. Bengt Berg, 1888-1895
Rev. L. J. Sundquist, 1806-1904
Mr. N. H. Youngberg, 1905-1910
Mr. A. G. Johnson, 1911-1916, 1918-1922
Mr. August Carlson, 1917
Rev. Carl E. Lundgren, 1923-1925
Mr. Herbert Johnson, 1926-1941
Leona Velen and Helen Carlson, Assistant Superintendents, 1942
Miss Helen Carlson, 1943-1945
Rev. John Billdt, 1947-1948
Mrs. Keith Anderson, 1949-1951
Miss Ruby Johnson, 1952
Mrs. Eldon Vandahl, 1953-1955
Mr. Eldon Vandahl, 1956-1958

MARIADAHL LADIES' AID

Mrs. Dennis Holt, Pres.; Mrs. Wilfrid Johnson, Vice-Pres.; Mrs. Quinton Esping, Sec.; and Mrs. Ed. Fritz, Treas.

THE MARIADAHL LADIES' AID

Early in our History, the first mention of the women was made as being more gifted in song than the men, and they therefore led the singing. It seems that almost from the first a so-called "Sewing Circle" and later a "Cent Society" was started. It had been questioned why that name, but it was possibly due to the fact that the Ladies' resources were counted in cents at that time. When one of our older ministers announced these meetings as one cent meetings, the ladies decided it was time to change the name to Ladies' Aid.

In the early days of the "Cent Societies" these were held in the various homes at the invitation of the hostess. They often included most of the family as "Father" went along to handle the driving chore. The pastor usually conducted a devotional period, including a short talk or sermon. It was also a means of social contact.

At one period the ladies contributed their so-called "egg money", their egg receipts from the days of Good Friday and Easter. An entry in 1925 from the Church secretary's report reads: Egg Money, $33.60.

Gradually our Society has become more organized into scheduled meetings with hostesses, committees, date of meetings, program chairmen, etc., calendared for a year in advance by the executive board. With our serving facilities improving in our church basement it has gradually become our meeting place although some of our hostesses still entertain in their homes, and these meetings are well attended and much enjoyed.

In looking through Ladies' Aid minutes from 1925 until the present time, many things have been accomplished. The following are some: Most of the equipment in the kitchen, folding-chairs and tables, basement stairways, screens, carpeting and painting of church interior at several different times. Clothing has been contributed and transportation costs paid by the Ladies' Aid to needy peoples of the world. Our Church Treasury has been replenished by at least $1,200.00, through the years. Red Cross and March of Dimes have received yearly contributions.

This money was raised by various means, namely: farm sales, $774; Men's Club, some over $200.00; Kiwanis, over $400.00; and Swedish Suppers, $2,990.69, together with our monthly collections. One person remarked, "What would Mariadahl do without the Ladies' Aid?"

We have been blessed with exceptionally able executive officers who have worked and sacrificed much time and labor to make our society successful. Harmony has existed in most cases, the reason why so much has been accomplished.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
Mrs. Grant Harter, Pres.; Mrs. Dennis Holt, Vice-Pres.; Mrs. Walter Vandahl, Sec.; Mrs. Johannes Vandahl, Treas.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Many years before the local Mariadahl Women's Missionary Society was organized, the pioneer community of Mariadahl situated in the Blue River Valley, was destined to be the setting for the organization of the Kansas Conference Women's Missionary Society. In 1900, when the Kansas Conference met in Mariadahl, a cordial invitation was given by Rev. and Mrs. L. J. Sundquist, for the women to meet at the parsonage. This was accepted and a Conference Society was organized. Some of the women became charter members but a local organization was not begun at that time. The love of Missions and concern for all the work of the church is shown by gifts to these causes by the Ladies' Aid organization.

On March 31, 1921, the Mariadahl WMS was organized at the home of Mrs. A. G. Johnson. Mrs. J. E. Carlson was the first president, Mrs. Philip Ekblad, secretary, and Mrs. Anton Johnson, treasurer At first the meetings were held quarterly, and later every other month. Special programs for American and World Missions have been held in which the entire Congrega-

tion took part. Well planned programs for the whole year's work, have helped to make the Study of Missions well worth while.

One of the more recent events was the return of the Kansas Conference Society to Mariadahl in May 1950, to observe its 50th Anniversary of organization. Many chartered buses from points all over Kansas brought the hundreds of women who came to participate. The program included a pageant, entitled "Golden Memories," depicting early Pioneer Home life as well as, Pioneer Church Activities. Many hardships met the early settlers, but they built upon the Word of God and His promises and these became their sure foundation.

As we in the year 1958 look back upon the accomplishments of the early days in the history of our church, we realize the value of the foundations laid by the Pioneer men and women, and thank God for the many blessings received because of their faithfulness.

"Thus in Thy service, Lord
Till eventide
Closes the day of life
May we abide."

Former presidents: Mrs. J. E. Carlson, Mrs. C. E. Lundgren, Mrs. Herbert Johnson, Mrs. J. A Peterson, Mrs Herman Holt, Mrs. Raymond Nelson, Mrs. Walter Vandahl, Mrs. C. Wilbur Nelson, Mrs. Otto Oleen, Mrs. A. G. Johnson, Mrs. Elmer Holt, Mrs. John Lind, Mrs. Grant Harter.

CHILDREN'S DIVISION WMS

The Children's Division of WMS, first known as the Junior Mission Band was started at a Sunday School gathering in 1919. The membership dues were 25¢, and the children had thank offering boxes. Sometimes those who gathered the most in them were made Life members of the Society. Leaders, chosen by the WMS, planned for and conducted the meetings which were usually held on Saturday afternoons. Supplies for schools and hospitals overseas were prepared and sent when possible. Thus, early in life the children learned about Missionary work and were given an opportunity to participate. In recent years the

work has been carried on in the Sunday School. The values and benefits the boys and girls have gained by taking part in this way cannot be measured. It has helped them to advance in the Christian life and given them a chance to take part in the work of the church as a whole—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6.

Some who served as leaders: Mrs. Raymond Nelson, Miss Helen Carlson, Mrs. Eldon Vandahl, Mrs. Quinton Esping, Miss Louise Gustafson, Miss Doris Velen, Miss Ruby Johnson.

MARIADAHL MISSIONARY GUILD

Almost as long as the church has existed there have been sewing societies. The young girls made and sold articles and with the proceeds helped in Church improvement.

Three young women crocheted the lace for the communion cloths on the altar and altar rail—Cora Ekblad, Florence Bjorling and Bertha Johnson.

The Dorcas Society had its first meeting at Cora Ekblad's. The first officers in 1918 were: President—Hulda Carlson, Vice-President—Amy Burklund, Secretary—Alice Nohlen, Treasurer—Ethel Johnson.

Fancy work was done at the meetings and on Thanksgiving evening there was a bazaar and a lunch was served. This continued until November, 1953.

The Dorcas Society gave three sets of paraments to the Church, green, white, and purple. The Dorcas also recovered the pulpit chairs. They also paid for the refinishing of the Church floors.

January, 1952, the Dorcas Society was changed to the Teenagers. Then, in January 1954, the Teenagers was changed to the Missionary Guild. The Teenagers had very few members and by changing, there was a larger organization. The Guild has practical work and good Missionary programs at its meetings.

Meetings are held the third Saturday of each month, except May and December. In 1958 there are eight members.

MARIADAHL MISSIONARY GUILD

Irene Erickson, Pres.; Gevon Holt, Vice-Pres.; Darlene Holt, Secretary; Doris Velen, Treas.

LUTHER LEAGUE

"That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." Psalm 144:12

One of the early and note-worthy organizations of the church has been the organization now known as the Luther League. Records show that this organization was formerly organized on October 5, 1897. At this time Conrad Ekblad was appointed secretary for the meeting—the Constitution for the Young People's Societies of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in Kansas was read by Rev. L. J. Sundquist. This constitution was adopted and the local organization was given the name "Luther League of Mariadahl, Kansas."

The objectives of this new organization were for the improvement of its members morally, socially, intellectually and spir-

itually, and to render to the church such aid as may be in its power to bestow.

Rev. L. J. Sundquist, the ex-officio president, served as its first leader and at the first meeting it was moved and seconded that the annual business meeting of the organization be held on the first Tuesday in March and that Literary meetings be held every third week of the month. It was also decided that the organization publish a paper. This paper had as its editors Albin Moreland and Conrad Ekblad.

Membership in the Mariadahl Luther League upon its organization was obtained by application being made at a regular meeting—this application was then acted upon by a committee and if the action was favorable the applicant became a member upon paying an initiation fee of five cents and a regular dues of ten cents. In later years membership was automatically granted to the members of the confirmation class upon taking their vows.

Meetings of this organization followed very closely an order of exercise: a call to order, roll call, singing, scripture reading and prayer, reading of the minutes, reports of committees, election of the officers, admission of new members, unfinished business, appointments, program, adjournment and prayer. It is also very interesting to note that the organization had very excellent programs consisting of declamations, vocal numbers, musical numbers by members of the Blue Valley Band and speeches by many guest speakers. One of the interesting events of the organization was the formal debates carried on by the members at the regular meetings. The first debate held was—Resolved that the United States is in greater danger from external foes than from internal factions.

In 1900, F. W. Christensen, Conrad Ekblad and Rev. Sundquist were elected to draft the local constitution. Two constitutions were drafted, one in Swedish, and one in English—the English Constitution was adopted at that time and in 1900 the organization was fully organized, after much effort, with the following officers:

President—F. W. Christensen
Vice President—Conrad Ekblad
Secretary—Nora Ipsen
Treasurer—Renius Nelson
Marshall—Oscar Linder

Miss Cora Ekblad, a living member of the present congregation, served as organist for many years and later Mrs. Haterius and her daughter Ruth served in the same capacity.

Many things of interest are found concerning the Luther League and some of the more important actions of the organization are listed as follows:

1904 a committee appointed to meet with the Executive Board of the Church to ask permission to put gas lights in the church. These lights were first placed upon the side walls but in 1908 were moved to the center and hung from the ceiling.

1905 purchased an organ from the Orphan's Home to be used in the church for worship service. Also in 1905 this organization began holding monthly socials and picnics to raise funds amounting to $50.00 to build a porch on the parsonage. This fund was paid in full in July 1906.

1907 gave $50.00 to the church treasurer to help pay off the church debt.

1910 gave $25.00 to buy books for the Orphan's Home Library, and it was during this year that the practice of getting Christmas trees for the church at Christmas time was started.

1911 raised funds to make necessary repairs on the Blue Valley Band Hall.

1913 began a series of lectures which were always well attended, and also a piano fund was set up to buy a piano for the church.

1917 gave $150.00 to the church for the addition of a furnace.

1920 decided to hold two meetings each month in place of one each Sunday.

1924 gave $100.00 to paint the interior of the church.

1925 agreed to pay ½ of the cost of lighting the Church Park located west of the parsonage in the grove.

1926 sponsored the show "Martin Luther" which was shown in Randolph. Also, this same year the first corn husking bee was held—this event continued for a number of years.

1932 gave $50.00 to redecorate the parsonage.

1933 began holding Bible Studies on Sunday evenings and also organized into two groups to stimulate interest—this was done by holding attendance contests.

In reading its minutes, it is easy to understand that the Luther League was one of the leading organizations of the church.

Many were the "strawberry socials" that were held, many were the oyster suppers at Thanksgiving time, and many were the ice cream socials held in private homes and in the near-by towns.

In the year 1957, the Mariadahl League, due to the lack of enough members to carry on alone, combined with the Olsburg Luther League. Even though the Luther League is inactive here at the present time the church still has a mission to fulfill in drawing youth of the church into fellowship with Christ and with fellow-Christians.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth, make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise." Ps. 98:4

Surely a large part of the worship service is the music, for then the whole congregation is participating. Mariadahl has been especially blessed by talented musicians. The first organists mentioned in church history were Gustaf Sjoberg and Peter Hanson but we do not have any information about them.

Mrs. L. J. Sundquist was an able organist and directed a large choir. Pastor Hokan Olson had two daughters who played the Reed organ for worship services, Olivia and Josephina. Olivia became Mrs. C. J. E. Haterius and continued her services in that capacity when she returned to Mariadahl as pastor's wife. Her daughters, Ruth and Eunice, put zest into the Sunday School singing. The Hateriuses were a musical family. Dr. Haterius, in his younger days, had considered becoming a music teacher. When he was serving as Swedish school teacher in Mariadahl, 1877 and 1878, he played for the festive wedding of Rev. C. E. Elving and Alma Johnson.

The Haterius children loved to sing and often gave concerts in the valley together with college friends.

The Mariadahl choir was trained by Mrs. Haterius to sing the lovely but difficult Wennerberg's "David's Psalmer." These grand melodies with their matchless words lived on in the hearts of the choir members for the rest of their days.

When the Hilgren-Lane pipe organ was given to the congregation by the N. P. Johnson family in 1912, it received an impressive—and long—dedication. The Sunday afternoon of February 1, 1914, was set for the dedication at which time Professor Hagbard Brase, famed organ instructor of Bethany College, was guest organist. Sarah Marty of Kansas City was guest soloist. Four speakers, Dr. Pihlblad, Rev. Eldien, Rev. C. E. Gustafson, Rev. Lonner were on the program and Professor Brase played four organ numbers. Dr. Haterius read the dedicatory service.

The Christensen family was a musically talented one, also. Two of the girls, Mary and Amelia, served as church organists. Incidentally, Amelia's daughter, Regina Fryxell, is a national authority on church and wedding music. Esther Christensen, while not serving as organist, gave music lessons and so started other young folks on their way toward being organists.

Phil R. Ekblad, another organist, and now a pastor, has a poetic soul which was, in all probability, instilled in him by the serenity of his childhood surroundings and by musings at the organ.

Mrs. C. E. Lundgren was a musician with a beautiful singing voice, and, to the many duties of a pastor's wife she added that of being organist, directing the choir, singing solos and giving music lessons.

She was followed by another talented pastor's wife, Mrs. C. Wilbur Nelson. Mrs. Nelson was an accomplished pianist. Her brother, Walter Peterson, possessed a bass voice of rich quality and often sang at morning worship services. Walter later joined the Metropolitan Opera Company. Mrs. Nelson's sister, Eldora Hanke, was voice instructor at Carthage College, in Missouri. She also favored us with solos.

When Mr. F. S. Gustafson became principal of Cleburne High School we gained the services of Mrs. Gustafson as choir director. She is now choir director in a large Austin church and voice instructor at the University of Texas. The choir enjoyed singing under her leadership, with Naomi Oleen, Rev. Oleen's daughter, as accompanist. Mrs. Gustafson has a beautiful, clear, soprano voice which she uses fully in the service of her Lord. We were privileged to have her as organist, also, for five years.

When the John Billdt's arrived to take charge of the Maria-

dahl Children's Home, Mrs. Billdt added the work of choir directing to her very busy schedule. She had the whole community singing. People who belonged to other churches, but who loved to sing under an able director, came to take part in musical programs she planned.

While the Children's Home was in existence we had many children in church, and therefore children's choirs have been conducted by women of the congregation at various times.

Several of the girls of the congregation have served as organists: Louise Gustafson, Esther Marie Vandahl, Jean Peterson, Carolyn Peterson, Lucile Johnson, and Ruby Johnson.

At present a very able organist, Leona Velen, is keeping up the high musical standards Mariadahl had set for itself. She has served faithfully and well for several years as organist and choir director. Because of her thoroughness and her interest in children, she has helped the Sunday School singing greatly. She serves the Lord with all her many talents for the joy of serving, and how much her playing has meant to our worship services cannot be expressed. It is only felt by those who worship in old Mariadahl.

"With trumpets and sound of the cornet, make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King." Psalm 98:6.

Following the above injunction, a group of young men of Mariadahl formed the Blue Valley Band, August 18, 1890, with D. W. Johnson as director. They played for Luther League conventions, for weddings and for patriotic gatherings. They bought an unused building which they converted into a Band Hall for practicing. They purchased a band wagon for traveling and secured Mr. G. O. Maxell as coachman. That band was the high point in many of the "band boys" lives, but especially, I think, in that of Anton Johnson.

MARIADAHL CHILDREN'S HOME

MARIADAHL CHILDREN'S HOME

Through the years the members of the Children's Home have been considered as part of our church family. Here they have attended Sunday School and Church. Many have been baptized and confirmed here.

With the exodus of the Mariadahl Church also goes the exodus of the Mariadahl Children's Home.

The Headquarters of the Child Welfare Work of the conference will now be located in Manhattan, Kansas.

PASTOR AND MRS. GLENN STENHOLM

A LOOK TOWARD THE FUTURE

I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15:1-2.

What a fitting selection for our 95th Anniversary! Down through the years Mariadahl Lutheran Church has always stood for "the branch that beareth fruit." Today as we look upon the past—the wonderful history of our church fills our hearts with joy, for that which is holy and just has always been the compelling force driving its people onward. Yes, many

have been the joys shared and also the sorrows, the most recent being the destruction of our Blue Valley and the eventual destruction of the physical building which has been Mariadahl Church. But the members of the congregation who are soon to be dispersed feel deep in their hearts that it is God's way of spreading His Gospel to new and many fields. May we who have so proudly fought for our Church, our homes and the beautiful Blue Valley go forth with one accord, knowing that every good branch that beareth fruit will be richly blessed by God.

I look not back; God knows the fruitless efforts,
The wasted hours, the sinning, the regrets.
I leave them all with Him who blots the record,
And graciously forgives, and then forgets.

I look not forward; God sees all the future,
The road that short or long will lead me home.
And He will face with me its every trial,
And bear for me the burdens that may come.

I look not round me; then would fears assail me,
So wild the tumult of earth's restless seas,
So dark the world, so filled with woe and evil,
So vain the hope of comfort and of ease.

I look not inward; that would make me wretched;
For I have naught on which to stay my trust.
Nothing I see save failures and shortcomings
And weak endeavors crumbling into dust.

But I look up—into the face of Jesus,
For there my heart can rest, my fears are stilled;
And there is joy, and love, and light for darkness,
And perfect peace, and every hope fulfilled.

UNKNOWN.

CONGREGATION, 1958

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